SHIPS THAT PASS IN THE NIGHT

By BEATRICE HARRADEN.

CHAPTER XL "IF ONE HAS MADE THE ONE GREAT SACRI-FICE.

There was a suicide in the Kurhaus one afternoon. A Dutchman, Vandervelt, had received rather a bad account of himself from the doctor a few days previously, and in a fit of depression, so it was thought, he had put a bullet through his head. It had occurred through Marie's unconscious agency. She found him lying on his sofa when she went as usual to take him his afternoon glass of milk. He asked her to

give him a packet which was on the top shelf of his cupboard.

"Willingly," she said, and she jumped nimbly on the chair and gave him the case.

"Anything more?" she asked kindly as she watched him draw himself up from the sofa. She thought at the time that he looked wild and strange. But then, as she pathetically said afterward, who did not look wild and strange in the Kurhaus! "Yes," he said. "Here are 5 francs for

you.' She thought that rather unusual, too, but 5 francs, especially coming unexpectedly like that, were not to be despised, and Marie determined to send them off to that mutterli at home in the nut brown chalet at Grusch.

So she thanked Mynheer van Vander-velt and went off to the pantry to drink some cold tea which the English people had left and to clean the lamps. Having done that and knowing that the matron was busily engaged carrying on a flirtation with a young Frenchman, Marie took out her writing materials and began a letter to her old mother. These peasants know how to love each other, and some of them know how to tell each other too. Marie knew. And she told her mother of the gifts she was bringing home, the little nothings given her by the guests.

She was very happy writing this letter. The little nut brown home rose before her. "Ach," she said, "how I long to be

And then sne put down her pen and sighed.

'Ach," she said, "and when I'm there I shall long to be here. Da wo ich nicht bin, da ist das gluck." Marie was something of a philosopher.

Suddenly she heard the report of a pistol, followed by a second report. She dashed out of her little pantry and ran in the direction of the sound. She saw Warli in the passage. He was looking scared, and his letters had fallen to the ground. He pointed to No. 54.

It was the Dutchman's room.

Help arrived. The door was forced open and Vandervelt was found dead. The case from which he had taken the pistol was lying on the sofa. When Marie saw that, she knew that she had been an unconscious accomplice. Her tender heart over-flowed with grief. While others were lift-ing him up she leaned her head against the

wall and sobbed. "It was my fault; it was my fault!" she "I gave him the case. But how was I to know?"

They took her away and tried to comfort her, but it was all in vain. "And he gave me 5 francs," she sobbed.

"I shudder to think of them." It was all in vain that Warli gave her a letter for which she had been longing for

"It is from your mutteril," he said as he put it into her hands. "I give it will-

ingly I don't like the looks of one or two the letters I have to give you, Mariechen. That Hans writes to you. Con-

But nothing could cheer her. Warli went away shaking his curly head sadly, shocked at the death of the Dutchman and shocked at Marie's sorrow. And the cheery

that evening. Bornarofye rang for her to come. Marie answered the bell, looking the picture of misery. Her kind face was tear stained, and her only voice was a sob.

Bernardine drew the girl to her. 'Poor old Marie, "she whispered. "Come and cry your kind heart out, and then you will feel better. Sit by me here and don't try to speak. And I will make you some tea in true English fashion, and you

must take it hot, and it will do you good." The simple sisterly kindness and silent sympathy soothed Marie after a time. The sobs ceased and the tears also. And Marie put her hand in her pocket and gave Bernardine the 5 francs.

"Fraulein Holme, I hate them," she 'I could never keep them. How could I send them now to my old mother? They would bring her ill luck-indeed they would. The matter was solved by Bernardine

in a masterly fashion. She suggested that Marie should buy flowers with the money and put them on the Dutchman's coffin This idea comforted Marie beyond Bernardine's most sanguine expectations. "A beautiful tin wreath." she said sev-

eral times. "I know the exact kind. When my father died, we put one on his grave. That same evening, during table d'hote, Bernardine told the Disagrecable Man the history of the afternoon. He had been developing photographs and had heard noth ing. He seemed very little interested in her relation of the suicide and merely re-

"Well, there's one person less in the

"I think you make these remarks from habit," Bernardine said quietly, and she went on with her dinner, attempting no further conversation with him. She herself had been much moved by the sad occurrence. Every one in the Kurhaus was more or less upset, and there was a thoughtful, anxious expression on more than one ordinarily thoughtless face.

The little French danseuse was quiet;

the Portuguese ladies were decidedly tearful: the vulgar German baroness was quite depressed; the comedian at the Belgian table ate his dinner in silence. In fact, there was a weight pressing down on all. Was it really possible, thought Bernar-dine, that Robert Allitsen was the only one there unconcerned and unmoved? She had seen him in a different light among his friends, the country folk, but it was just a glimpse which had not lasted long. The young heartedness, the geniality, the sympathy which had so astonished her sympathy which had so astonished her during their day's outing astonished her still more by their total disappearance. The gruffness had returned, or had it never been absent? The lovelessness and leaden-ness of his temperament had once more asserted themselves, or was it that they had never for one single day been in the background?

These thoughts passed through her mind as he sat next to her reading his paper—that paper hich he never passed on to any one. She hardened her heart against him. There was no need for ill bealth and

disappointment to have brought any one to a miserable state of indifference like that. Then she looked at his wan face and frail form, and her heart softened at once. At the moment when her heart softened to him he astonished her by handing her his

paper.
"Here is something to interest you, said, "an article on 'Realism In Fiction or some nonsense like that. You needn't read it now. I don't want the pape again."
"I thought you never lent anything,"
"I thought you never lent anything,"

she said as she glanced at the article "much less gave it." "Giving and lending are not usually in ny line," he replied. "I think I told you

my line,' once that I thought selfishness perfectly desirable and legitimate if one had made the one great sacrifice."

"Yes," she said eagerly. "I have often wondered what you considered the one great sacrifice." "Come out into the sir," he caswered

'and I will tell you.' She went to put on her cloak and hat and found him waiting for her at the top of the staircase. They passed out into the beautiful night. The sky was radiantly bejeweled, t. air crisp and cold and harmless to do ill. In the distance the yodel ling of some peasants. In the hotels the fun and merriment, side by side with the suffering and hopelessness. In the deaconess' hous the body of the Dutchman.

In God's heavens God's stars.

Robert Allitsen and Bernardine walked silently for some time.

"Well," she said, "now tell me." "The one great sacrifice," he said half to himself, "is the going on living one's life for the sake of another when everything that would seem to make life accept able has been wrenched away, not the pleas ures, but the duties and the possibilities of expressing one's energies, either ir one direction or another-when, in fact, liv ing is only a long, tedious dying. If one has made this sacrifice, everything else may be forgiven.

He paused a moment and then continued: "I have made this sacrifice; therefore I

consider I have done my part without flinching. The greatest thing I had to give up I gave up—my death. More could not be required of any one." He paused again, and Bernardine was si-

lent from mere awe.

"But freedom comes at last," he said "and some day I shall be free. When my mother dies, I shall be free. She is old. If I were to die, I should break her heart, o rather she would fancy that her heart was broken. And it comes to the same thing. And I should not like to give her more grief than she has had. So I am just wait ing. It may be months or weeks or yea But I know how to wait. If I have not learned anything else, I have learned how to wait. And then"-

Bernardine had unconsciously put her hand on his arm. Her face was full of suffering. "And then?" she asked, with almos

painful eagerness.
"And then I shall follow your Dutch man's example," he said deliberately.

Bernardine's hand fell from the Dis

agreeable M.n's arm. "You are cold, you little thing," he said almost tenderly for him. "You are

shivering."
"Was I?" she said, with a short laugh. 'I was wondering when you would ge your freedom and whether you would us it in the fashion you now intend."

'Why should there be any doubt?" h asked.

"One always hopes there would be a loubt," she said, half in a whisper. Then he looked up and saw all the pain

CHAPTER XII.

THE DISAGREEABLE MAN MAKES A LOAN. The Dutchman was buried in the little cemetery which faced the hospital. Marie's tin wreath was placed on the grave. And there the matter ended. The Kurhaus guests recovered from their depres sion; the German baroness returned to her little postman did not do much whistling | buoyant vulgarity; the little danseuse to her busy flirtations. The French marchioness, celebrated in Parisian circles for her domestic virtues, from which she was now taking a holiday, and a very considerable holiday, too, gathere her nerves together again and took renewed pleasure in the society of the Russian gentleman. The French marchioness had already been re quested to leave three other hotels in Petershof, but it was not at all probable that the proprietors of the Kurhaus would have presumed to measure madame's morality or immorality. The Kurhaus committee had a benign indulgence for humanityprovided, of course, that humanity had a ourse-an indulgence which some of the English hotels would not have done badly to imitate. There was a story affoat concerning the English quarter that a tired little English lady, of no importance to look at, probably not rich and probably not handsome, came to the most respecta ble hotel in Petershof, thinking to find there the peace and quiet which her weariness required.

But no one knew who the little lady vas, whence she had come and why. She kept entirely to herself and was thankful for the luxury of loneliness after some overwhelming sorrow.

One day she was requested to go. The proprietor of the hotel was distressed, but could not do otherwise than comply with the demands of his guests.

"It is not known who you are, made moiselle," he said. "And you are not approved of. You English are curious people. But what can I do? You have a cheap room and are a stranger to me. The others have expensive apartments and come year after year. You see my posi

tion, mademoiselle! I am sorry." So the little tired lady had to go. That was how the story went. It was not known what became of her, but it was known that the English people in the Kurhaus tried to persuade her to come to them. But she had lost heart and left in distress.

This could not have happened in the Kurhaus, where all were received on equal terms, those about whom nothing was known and those about whom too much was known. The strange mixture and the contrasts of character afforded endles scope for observation and amusement, and Bernardine, who was daily becoming more interested in her surroundings, felt that she would have been sorry to have exchanged her present abode for the English quarter. The amusing part of it was that the English people in the Kurhaus were regarded by their compatriots in the Eng-lish quarter as sheep of the blackest dye! This wes all the more ridiculous be with two exceptions—firstly, of Mrs. Ref-fold, who took nearly all her pleasures with the American colony in the Grand hotel, and, secondly, of a Scotch widow who had returned to Petershof to weep over who had returned to Petershot to weapover her husband's grave, but put away her grief, together with her widow's weeds, and consoled herself with a Spanish gentleman—with these two exceptions, the little English community in the Kurhaus was most humdrum and harmless, being occupied, as in the case of the Disagrees-

bie Man, with cameras and choose mites, or in other cases with the still more engrossing pastime of taking care of one's 1½ health, whether real or fancied, but yet an innocent hobby in itself and giving one absolutely no leisure to do anything worse—a great recommendation for any pastime. This was not Bernardine's cocupation. It was difficult to say what she did with herself, for she had not yet followed Robert Allitsen's advice and taken up some definite work, and the very fact that she

definite work, and the very fact that she had no such wish pointed probably to a state of health which forbade it.

She, naturally so keen and hardworking, She, naturally so keen and hardworking, was content to take what the heur brought, and the hour brought various things. Chess with the Swedish professor, or Rus-sian dominoes with the shriveled up little Polish governess who always tried to cheat and who clutched her tiny winnings with precisely the same greediness shown by the Monte Carlo female gamblers. Or the hour brought a stroll with the French danseuse and her poodle, and a conversa tion about the mere trivialities of life which a year or two, or even a few months ago, Bernardine wou'd have condemned as beneath contempt, but which were now taking their rightful place in her new standard of importances, for some natures learn, with greater difficulty and after greater delay than others, that the real importances of our existence are the nothingnesses of everyday life, the nothingnesses which the philosopher in his study, reasoning about and analyzing human character, is apt to overlook, but which nevertheless make him and every one else more of a human reality and less of an abstraction. And Bernardine, hitherto occupied with so called intellectual pursuits, with problems of the study, of no value to the great world outside the study, or with social problems of the great world, great movements and great questions, was now just beginning to appreciate the value of the little incidents of that same great world. Or the hour brought its thoughts, and Bernardine found herself constantly thinking of the Disagreeable Man, always in sorrow and always with sympathy and sometimes with tenderness.

When he told her about the one sacrifice she could have wished to wrap him round with love and tenderness. If he could only have known it, he had never been so near love as then. She had suffered so much herself, and with increasing weaknesses had so wished to put off the burden of the flesh that her whole heart went out to him.

Would he get his freedom, she wondered, and would he use it? Sometimes when she was with him she would look up to see whether she could read the answer in his face, but she never saw any variation of expression there, nothing to give her even a suggestion. But this she no--that there was a marked variation in his manner, and that when he had been rough in bearing or bitter in speech he made silent amends at the earliest opportunity by being less rough and less bitter. She felt this was no small concession on the part of the Disagreeable Man.

He was particularly disagreeable on the day when the Dutchman was buried, and so the following day when Bernardine met him in the little English library she was not surprised to find him almost kindly. He had chosen the book which she want

ed, but he gave it up to her at once with out any grumbling, though Bernardine expected him to change his mind before they left the library.
"Well," he said as they walked along

ogether, "and have you recovered from the death of the Dutchman?" Have you recovered, rather let me

ask?" she said. "You were in a horrid mood last night."

"I was feeling wretchedly ill," he said

That was the first time he had ever alluded to his own health.

"Not that there is any need to make an excuse," he continued, "for I do not recognize that there is any necessity to consult one's surroundings and alter the inclination of one's mind accordingly. Still, as a matter of fact, I felt very ill. And today?" she asked.

"Today I am myself again," he an-wered quickly, "that usual normal self of mine, whatever that may mean. slept well, and I dreamed of you. I can't say that I had been thinking of you, because I had not. But I dreamed that we were children together and playmates. Now, that was very odd, because I was a lonely child and never had any playmates. "And I was lonely, too," said Bernar-

"Every one is lonely," he said, "but ev-

ery one does not know it." "But now and again the knowledge comes like a revelation," she said, "and we realize that we stand practically alone, out of any one's reach for help or comfort. When you come to think of it, too, how little able we are to explain ourselves! When you have wanted to say something which was burning within you, have you not noticed on the face of the listener that unmistakable look of noncomprehension which throws you back on yourself? That is one of the moments when the soul lows its own loneliness."

Robert Allitsen looked up at her. "You little thing," he said, "you put things neatly sometimes. You have felt, haven't you?"

"I suppose so," she said. "But that is true of most people." "I beg your pardon," he answered, "most people neither think nor feel un-

less they think they have an ache, and then "I believe," said Bernardine, "that

there is more thinking and feeling than one generally supposes."
"Well. I can't be bothered with that now," he said. "And you interrupted me about my dream. That is an annoying

habit you have.' "Go on," she said. "I apologize." "I dreamed we were children together and playmates," he continued. "We were not at all happy together, but still we were playmates. There was nothing we did quarrel about. You were disagreeable, and I was spiteful. Our greatest dispute was over a Christmas tree. And that was odd, too, for I have never seen a Christ-

"Well?" she said, for he had paused What a long time you take to tell a sto-

You were not called Bernardine," he said. "You were called by some ordinary, sensible name. I don't remember what. But you were very disagreeable. That I remember well. At last you disappeared. and I went about looking for you. can find something to cause a quarrel, said to myself, 'she will come back.' So went and smashed your doll's head. But you did not come back. Then I set on fire you did not come back. Then I set on fire your doll's house. But even that did not bring you back. Nothing brought you back. That was my dream. I hope you are not offended. Not that it makes any difference if you are."

Bernardine laughed.
"I am sorry that I should have been such an unpleasant playmate," she said. "It was a good thing I did disappear."
"Perhaps it was," he said. "There would have been a terrible scene about that

about Christmas trees and dolls and play-mates, especially when I went to sleep thinking about my new camera."
"You have a new camera." she asked.

"Yes," he answered, "and a beauty too. Would you like to see it?" She expressed a wish to see it, and when they reached the Kuriaus she went with him up to his beautiful room, where he spent his time in the company of his microscope and his chemical bottles and his photographic research.

photographic possessions.

"If you sit down and look at those photographs, I will make you some tea," he said. "There is the camera, but please not to touch it until I am ready to show it myself."

She watched him preparing the tea. He did everything so daintily, this Disagreeable Man. He put a handkerchief on the table to serve for an afternoon teacloth, and a tiny vase of violets formed the cen-terpiece. He had no cups, but he polished up two tumblers, and no housemaid could have been more particular about their glossiness. Then he boiled the water and made the tea. Once she offered to help him, but he shook his head.

"Kindly not interfere," he said

After tea they began the inspection of the new camera, and Robert Allitsen showed her all the newest improvements. He did not seem to think much of her intelligence, for he explained everything as though he were talking to a child, until

Bernardine rather lost patience.
"You need not enter into such elaborate explanations," she suggested. "I have a small amount of intelligence, though you

do not seem to detect it. He looked at her as one might look at an impatient child.

"Kindly not to interrupt me," he re-plied mildly. "How very impatient you are! And how restless! What must you have been like before you fell ill?"

But he took the hint all the same and shortened his explanations, and as Bernardine was genuinely interested he was well satisfied. From time to time he looked at his old camera and at his companion, and from the expression of unease on his face it was evident that some contest was go-ing on in his mind. Twice he stood near his old camera and turned round to Ber pardine Intending to make some remark Then he changed his mind and walked abruptly to the other end of the room, as though to seek advice from his chemical bottles." Bernardine meanwhile had risen from her chair and was looking out of the

"You have a lovely view," she said. "It must be nice to look at that when you are tired of dissecting cheese mites. All the same, I think the white scenery gives one great sense of sadness and loneliness. 'Why do you speak always of loneli-

ness?" he asked.

"I have been thinking a good deal about it," she said. "When I was strong and vigorous, the idea of loneliness never entered my mind. Now I see how lonely most people are. If I believed in God as a personal God, I should be inclined to think that loneliness were part of his scheme, so that the soul of man might turn to him and him alone." The Disagreeable Man was standing by

his camera again. His decision was made "Don't think about those questions." he aid kindly. "Don't worry and fret too much about the philosophy of life. Leave philosophy alone and take to photography nstead. Here, I will lend you my old camera." "Do you mean that?" she asked, glanc-

ing at him in astonishment.
"Of course I mean it," he said. He looked remarkably pleased with him self, and Bernardine could not help smil-

ing. He looked just as a child looks when e has given up a toy to another child and is conscious that he has behaved himself rather well. "I am very much obliged to you," she

said frankly. "I have had a great wish to learn photography."
"I might have lent my camera to you

before, mightn't I?" he said thoughtfully.
"No," she answered. "There was not "No," he said, with a kind of relief, there was not any reason. That is quite

"When will you give me my first les-n?" she asked. "Perhaps, though, you son!" she asked. would like to wait a few days, in case you change your mind."

'It takes me some time to make up my aind," he replied, "but I do not change it. So I will give you your first lesson tocorrow. Only you must not be impatient. You must consent to be taught. You cannot possibly know everything.

They fixed a time for the morrow, and Bernardine went off with the camera, and meeting Marie on the staircase confided her the piece of good fortune which had

"See what Herr Allitsen has lent me, Marie!" she said. Marie raised her hands in astonishment

"Who would have thought such a thing of Herr Allitsen?" said Marie. does not like lending me a match." Bernardine laughed and passed on to her

And the Disagreeable Man meanwhile was cutting a new scientific book which had just come from England. He spent a good deal of money on himself. He was soon absorbed in this book and much in-

terested in the diagrams. Suddenly he looked up to the corner where the old camera had stood before Bernardine took it away in triumph.

'I hope she won't hurt that camera, he said a little uneasily. "I am half sorry Then a kinder mood took possession of

him.
"Well, at least it will keep her from fussing and fretting and thinking. Still I hope she won't hurt it."

CHAPTER XIII.

A DOMESTIC SCENE.

One afternoon when Mrs. Reffold came to say goodby to her husband before going out for the usual sledge drive he surprised her by his unwonted manner. "Take your cloak off," he said sharply.

"You cannot go for your drive this after-noon. You don't often give up your time to me. You must do so today. She was so astonished that she at once laid aside her cloak and hat and touched

the bell.
"Why are you ringing?" Mr. Reffold asked testily. "To send a message of excuse," she an-

swered, with provoking cheerfulness. She scribbled something on a card and gave it to the servant who answered the

"Now," she said, with great sweetness of manner. And she sat down beside him, drew out her fancy work and worked away contentedly. She would have made a charming study of a devoted wife soothing "Do you mind giving up your drive?"

"You soon get tired of things, Winifred," he said.
"Yes, I do," was the answer. "I am so easily bored. I am quite tired of this place."
"You will have to stay here a little long-en," he said, "and then you will be free to go where you choose. I wish I could die quicker for you, Winifred."

Mrs. Refield looked up from her embroiders.

broidery.
"You will get better soon," she said.

"You are better."
"Yes, you've helped a good deal to make
me better," he said bitterly. "You have
been a most unselfish person, havan't you! You have given me every care and atten-

"You seem to me in a very strange mood today," she said, looking puzzled.

don't understand you."

Mr. Reffold laughed.

"Poor Winifred," he said. "If it is ever your lot to fall ill and be neglected, perhaps then you will think of me."

"Neglected!" she said in some surprise.

"What do you mean? I thought you had everything you wanted. The nurse brought excellent testimonials. I was careful in the choice of her. You have never com-

plained before." He turned wearlly on his side and made no answer, and for some time there was silence between them. Then he watched her as she bent over her embroidery.
"You are very beautiful, Winifred," he said quietly, "but you are a selfish wom-

Has it ever struck you that you are selfish?" Mrs. Reffold gave no reply, but she made a resolution to write to her particular friend at Cannes and confide to her how

very trying lar husband had become.
"I suppose it is part of his illness," she thought meekly. "But it is hard to have

And Mrs. Reffold pitied herself profoundly. She stitched sincere pity for her

self into that piece of embroidery.
"I remember you telling me," continued Mr. Reffold, "that sick people repelled you. That was when I was strong and vigorous. But since I have been ill I have often recalled your words. Poor Wini-fred! You did not think then that you would have an invalid husband on your hands. Well, you were not intended for sickroom nursing, and you have not tried to be what you were not intended for. Perhaps you were right, after all."

"I don't know why you should be so un-kind today," Mrs. Reffold said, with pathetic patience. "I can't understand you. You have never spoken like this before."
"No," he s.id, "but I have thought like
this before. All the hours that you have
left me lonely I have been thinking like this, with my heart full of bitterness against you, until that little girl, that Little Brick, came along.'

After that it was some time before he spoke. He was thinking of his Little Brick, and of all the pleasant hours he had spent with her, and of the kind, wise words she had spoken to him, an ignorant fellow. She was something like a compan

ion. So he went on thinking, and Mrs. Reffold went on embroidering. She was now feeling herself to be almost a heroine. It is a very easy matter to make oneself into a heroine or a martyr. Selfish, neglectful? What did he mean? of his illness. She must go on bearing her burden as she had borne it these many months. Her rightful position was in London ballroom, instead of which she had to be shut up in an Alpine village—a hard lot It was little enough pleasure she could get, and apparently her husband grudged her that.

His manner to her this afternoon was not such as to encourage her to stay in from her drive on another occasion.

morrow she would go sledging. That flash of light which reveals ourelves to ourselves had not yet come to Mrs. Reffold

She looked at her husband and thought from his restfulness that he had gone to sleep, and she was just beginning to write to that particular friend at Cannes to tell her what a trial she was undergoing when Mr. Reffold called her to his side.

"Winifred," he said gently, and there was tenderness in his voice and love written on his face, "Winifred, I am sorry if I have been sharp to you. Little Brick says we mustn't come down like sledge hammers on each other, and that is what I have been doing this afternoon. Per-haps I have been hard. I am such an illness to myself that I must be an illness to others too. And you weren't meant for this sort of thing, were you? You are a bright, beautiful creature, and I am an unfortunate dog not to have been able to make you happier. I know I am irritable. I can't help myself; indeed I can't.

This great, long fellow was so yearning for love and sympathy.

What would it not have been to him if she had gathered him into her arms and soothed all his irritability and suffering

with her love? But she pressed his hand and kissed him lightly on the cheek and told him that he had been a little sharp, but that she quite understood, and that she was not hurt. Her charm of manner gave him some satisfaction, and when Bernardine came in a few minutes later she found Mr. Reffold looking happier and more contented than she had ever seen him. Mrs. Reffold, who was relieved at the interruption, received Bernardine warmly, though there was a certain amount of shyness which she had never been able to conquer in Bernardine's presence. There was something in the younger woman which quelled Mrs. Reffold. It may have been some mental

quality, or it may have been her boots.
"Little Brick," said Mr. Reffold, "isn't it nice to have Winifred here? And I have been so disagreeable and snappish." "Oh, we won't say anything about that now," said Mrs. Reffold, smiling sweetly.

"But I've said I am sorry," he contin-"And one can't do more." "No," said Bernardine, who was amused at the notion of Mr. Reffold apologizing to Mrs. Reffold, and of Mrs. Reffold posing as the gracious forgiver, "one can't do more." But she could not control her feel-

ings, and she laughed. You seem rather merry this afternoon." Mr. Reffold said in a reproachful tone of

"Yes." she said. And she laughed again Mrs. Reffold's forgiving graciousness had altogether upset her gravity.
"You might at least tell us the joke," Mrs. Reffold said.

Bernardine looked at her hopelessly and

laughed again.
"I have been developing photographs all
the afternoon," she said, "and I suppose
the closeness of the air and the badness of my negatives have been too much for me. Anyway I know I must seem very rude. She recovered herself after that and tried hard not to think of Mrs. Reffold as the dispenser of forgiveness, although it was some time before she could look at her some time before she could look as her hostess without wishing to laugh. The corners of her mouth twitched, and her brown eyes twinkled mischlevously, and she spoke very mpidly, making fun of her first attempts as photography and crisi-

olsing herself so comically that both Mr. and Mrs. Reffold were much amused.

All the same Bernardine was relieved when Mrs. Reffold went to fetch some silks and left her with Mr. Reffold.

"I am very happy this afternoon, Little Brick," he said to her. "My wife has been sitting with me. But instead of enjoying the pleasure as I ought to have done I began to find fault with her. I don't know how long I should not have gone on grumbling but that I suddenly recollected what you taught me—that we were not to come down like sledge hammers on each other's fallings. When I remembered that, it was quite easy to forgive all the neglect and thoughtlessness. Since you have talked to me, Little Brick, everything has become easier to me."

"It is something in your own mind which has worked this," she said, "your own kind, generous mind, and you put it down to my words."

But he shook his head.

"If I knew of any poor unfortunate day! I knew of any poor unfortunate day! that wanted to he assess and com-

"If I knew of any poor unfortunate devil that wanted to be eased and com-forted," he said, "I should tell him about you, Little Brick. You have been very good to me. You may be clever, but you have never worried my stupid brain with too much scholarship. I'm just an igno-rant chap, and you've never let me feel it." He took her hand and raised it reverent ly to his lips.

"I say," he continued, "tell my wife it made me happy to have her with me this afternoon. Then perhaps she will stay in another time. I should like her to know. And she was sweet in her manner, wasn't she? And, by Jovo, she is beautiful! I am glad you have seen her here today. It must be dull for her with an invalid like me. And I know I am irritable. Go and tell her that she made me happy, will

The little bit of happiness at which the poor fellow snatched seemed to make him more pathetic than before. Bernardine promised to tell his wife and went off to find her, making as an excuse a book which Mrs. Reffold had offered to lend her. Mrs. Reffold was in her bedroom. She asked Bernardine to sit down while she searched for the book. She had a very gracious manner when she chose. "You are looking much better, Miss Holme," she said kindly. "I cannot help noticing your face. It looks younger and brighter. The bracing air has done you good."

"Yes, I am better," Bernardine said, rather astonished that Mrs. Reffold should have noticed her at all. "Mr. Allitsen informs me that I shall live, but never be strong. He settles every question of that sort to his own satisfaction, but not always to the satisfaction of other people!"
"He is a curious person," Mrs. Reffold

said, smiling, "though I must say he is not quite as gruff as he used to be. seem to be good friends with him." She would have liked to say more on this subject, but experience had taught her that Bernardine was not to be trifled

with. "I don't know about being good friends," Bernardine said, "but I have a great sympathy for him. I know myself what it is to be cut off from work and active life. I have been through a misery. But mine is nothing to his." She rose to go, but Mrs. Reffold detain-

ed her. "Don't go yet," she said. "It is pleas ant to have you." She was leaning back in an armchair, playing with the fringe of an antimacas

"Oh, how tired I am of this horrid place!" she said suddenly. "And I have had a most wearying afternoon. Mr. Reffold seems to be more irritable av It is very hard that I should have to hear

Bernardine listened to her in astonish ment. "Yes," she added, "I am quite worn out. He never used to be so irritable. It

is all very tiresome. It is quite telling on my health She looked the picture of health. Bernardine gasped, and Mrs. Reffold continued: "His grumbling this afternoon has been

was ashamed and asked me to forgive him. You heard him, didn't you?' "Yes, I heard him," Bernardine said. "And of course I forgave him at once,"

Mrs. Reffold said piously. "Naturally one would do that, but the vexation remains all the same." "Can these things be?" thought Bernar dine to herself.

"He spoke in a most ridiculous way."

she went on. "It certainly is not encour-aging for me to spend another afternoon with him. I shall go sledging tomorrow. "You generally do go sledging, don't you!" Bernardine asked mildly. Mrs. Reffold looked at her suspiciously.

She was never quite sure that Bernardine was not making fun of her. "It is little enough pleasure I do have," she added as though in self defense. "And

he seems to grudge me that too."
"I don't think he would grudge you anything," Bernardine said, with some warmth. "He loves you too much for that. You don't know how much pleasure you give him when you spare him a little of your time. He told me how happy you made him this afternoon. You could see for yourself that he was happy. Mrs. Reffold, make him happy while you still have him. Don't you understand that he is passing away from you—don't you under-stand, or is it that you won't? We all see

it—all except you."
She stopped suddenly, surprised at her

Mrs. Reffold was still leaning back in the armchair, her hands clasped together above her beautiful head. Her face was She did not speak. Bernardine waited. The silence was unbroken save by the merry cries of some children tobogganing in the Kurhaus garden. The stillness grew oppressive, and Bernardine rose. She knew from the effort which those few words had cost her how far removed she was from her old former self.
"Goodby, Mrs. Reffold," she said nerv-

ousiy. "Goodby, Miss Holme," was the only

TO BE CONTINUED.

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